

Remarks

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present U.S. Patent application as amended herein. Independent claims 1, 16, 25, and 35 have been amended. Claims 44 and 45 have been added. Claims 3, 14, 21, 23, 33, 36, 38, and 41-43 have been canceled. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 4-13, 15-20, 22, 24-32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, and 44-45 are pending.

Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 4-13, and 15

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Meier et al. (U.S. Patent 6,147,790). However, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable claim 3 and is therefore in condition for allowance. The applicant submits that claims 2, 4-13, and 15 are similarly allowable as dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claims 16-20, 22, and 24

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Meier. However, claim 16 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable claim 21 and is therefore in condition for allowance. The applicant submits that claims 17-20, 22, and 24 are similarly allowable as dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claims 25-32 and 34

Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Meier. However,

claim 25 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable claim 33 and is therefore in condition for allowance. The applicant submits that claims 26-32 and 34 are similarly allowable as dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claims 35, 37, 39, and 40

Claim 35 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Meier. However, claim 35 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable claim 36 and is therefore in condition for allowance. The applicant submits that claims 37, 39, and 40 are similarly allowable as dependent from an allowable base claim.

New Claims 44 and 45

Claims 44 and 45 have been added to the application. Claim 44 includes the subject matter and limitations of original independent claim 1 with the added limitations of original allowable claim 14. Likewise, claim 45 includes the subject matter and limitations of original claim 35 with the added limitations of original allowable claim 38. Essentially, claims 14 and 38 have been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested by the Examiner.

CONCLUSION

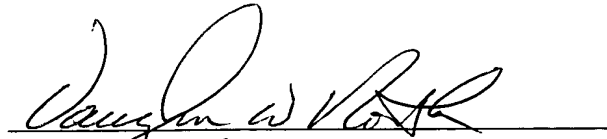
For at least the foregoing reasons, the applicant submits that the rejections have been overcome. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 4-13, 15-20, 22, 24-32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, and 44-45 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination

of the present application. Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit
Account number 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

Dec 17, 04

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Vaughn W. North", written over a horizontal line.

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